Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form Survey No. B-5037

1. Name				
Historic	700 – 714 Melvin Street			
and / common	700 - 714 McMin Street			
and / common				
2. Location				
street & number	700 - 714 Melvin Street			
city, town	Baltimore			
state & zip code	Maryland 21205	county		
3. Classifica	tion			
Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	X occupied	agriculture	museum
X building(s)	X private	unoccupied	commercial	park
structure	both	work in progress	educational	X private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	entertainment	religious
object	in process	X yes: restricted	government	scientific
	being considered	yes: unrestricted	industrial	transportation
	not applicable	no	military	other:
4. Owner of	Property			
street & number			teleph	one
city, town		state &	zip code	ione
	of Legal Descri			
	deeds, etc. Baltimore City La			liber
street & number	Clarence Mitche			folio
city, town Baltimor	re	State	Maryland	
6. Represent	tation in Existin	g Historical	Surveys	
title				
date	fe	ederal st	ate county	local
depository for survey re	ecords			
city, town		state &	zip code	

Maryland	Historical	Trust		
Maryland	Inventory	of Historic	Properties	Form

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7. Description

Condition		Check One	Check One
excellent _x good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered X altered	X original sitemoved: date of move:

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of eight two-bay-wide, two-story brick houses with low-pitched gable roofs are typical of the small alley houses built in Baltimore in the 1850s and 1860s, often along especially narrow secondary alley streets running perpendicularly off the main "alley" street. All of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were always painted.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide, and occupy lots 62' deep. Each two-room-deep house has a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. The pitch of the gable roof is especially low, a characteristic of this particular type of two-story, gable-roofed alley house. The houses are constructed in common bond, and were originally painted. Each house has a simple brick corbelled cornice. Chimneys are located at the rear end of the kitchen addition.

Door and window openings have flat wood lintels and sills. Most houses have been "restored" with 6/6 replacement sash and most also have modern six-panel doors set beneath the single-light doorway transoms. The houses sit on medium-height basements, the entrances being reached by four concrete or brick steps.

The houses are basically two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace.

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8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify		
prehistoric 1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 X 1800-1899 1900	archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	X community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration industry invention	landscape architecturelawliteraturemilitarymusicphilosophypolitics/government	religion science sculpture X social/ humanitarian theatre transportation other: specify
Specific dates c. 18	50 - 1860	Builder/Archi	itect	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses are significant as representing a relatively plain type of small street house that was constructed to provide inexpensive housing for the working class residents of the area, most of whom were German or Irish at the time of construction. The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the middle and late nineteenth century. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and north-east and southwest of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell \$1,000 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$600 - \$800. Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the \$8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

The houses are especially significant because of their proximity to the Baltimore & Ohio railroad yards, the nation's first railroad, and its related railroad-oriented industries, like car and rail shops. Housing of this type was built to provide inexpensive housing for the wide variety of both Irish and German immigrants who came to southwest Baltimore to work in railroad-related industries in the decade before the Civil War.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward	
Organization The Alley House Project	date
treet & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.	telephone
city, town Baltimore	state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

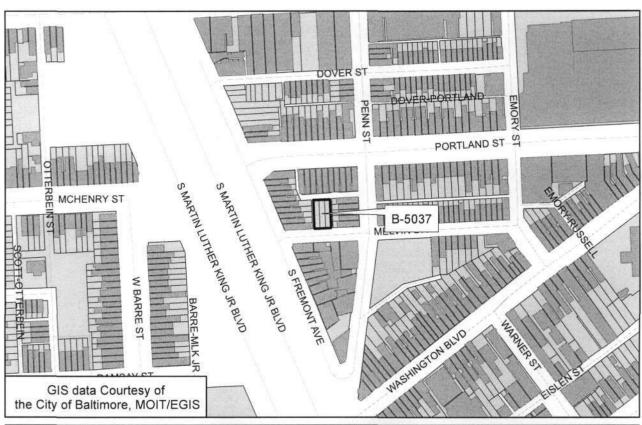
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to: DHCP/DHCD Maryland Historical Trust 100 Community Place Crownsville MD 21032-2023



Demolished

B-5037 710-714 Melvin Drive Block 0685B Lots 035-037 Baltimore City Baltimore West Quad







629-457 Donn B-5038
629-457 Donn St.

SWB-1

BALTO. HD

C. Belfoune
2/48

1113841 0211 NMO SHPO

1/2



631 Dover

B-5038 631 Dora St. BALTO, MD C.Belfonie 2/98